Program Completion Rate Data Collection for Biennial Reporting
October 2013

Introduction
This agenda item provides information for a discussion to determine whether the Commission's accreditation system should be modified to require institutions to analyze data regarding candidate completion rates and submit that data with the Biennial Report. In addition, should the Biennial Report include a discussion by the program sponsor regarding the need for program improvement and/or changes that results from analyzing the program completer data?

Staff Recommendation
That the COA considers revising the BR to include the requirement of an analysis of program completer data and the need for inclusion of program modifications that result from the analysis of that data.

Background
The Biennial Report requires all programs to report the number of candidates who complete the program in a given year. This data has been used primarily as contextual information for reviewers as the Commission's standards do not include reference to program completer data. However, after reviewing documents for a number of years, it has become clear that, in some cases, the program completion data submitted raises a number of questions that may call into question the quality of a program.

Currently, the biennial report asks programs to describe changes and improvements since the last accreditation activity as well as provide data and analyses for 4-6 assessments per program. As mentioned above, the current biennial report format also contains a section that asks institutions to report candidate completion rate data by program. However, it does not require analysis or a determination regarding the need for program improvement nor describe the change in completer rates that may have resulted from previous program modifications. A requirement for analysis within the Biennial Report will help inform what factors related to the program are contributing to the program completion rates and encourage reflection leading to program improvement.

To assist in the discussion of this topic, examples of program completer data from several Biennial Reports are provided in the tables below. The first two examples are from institutions offering school counseling. The second example is drawn from an institution that is concluding the last year of a designated subjects credential program, and the third example is of a table that includes data from both general and special education teacher preparation. And finally, the fourth example is from a program that appears to have a strong program completer rate.

Example One

School Counseling Credential				
Numbers of candidates and completers/graduates for two years reported				
Site	**2010-11**		**2011-12**	
	Number of Candidates	**Number of Completers/ Graduates**	**Number of Candidates**	**Number of Completers/ Graduates**
AAA	11	3	10	1
BBB	31	8	24	5
CCC	33	18	32	8
Total	**75**	**29**	**66**	**14**

Example Two

School Counseling Credential						
Numbers of candidates and completers/graduates for two years reported						
Site (If multiple sites) Delivery Option	**2009-10**		**2010-2011**		**2011-12**	
	Number of Candidates *	Number of Completers/ Graduates	Number of Candidates *	Number of Completers/ Graduates	Number of Candidates	Number of Completers/ Graduates
Traditional - Main Campus	132	32	147	33	153	31

An analysis of these data might lead to a discussion potentially explaining the low completion (is it a three year program? are students counseled out during fieldwork?) or it could lead to improvements that increase the completion rate over two years. Neither biennial report included analysis, determination of need or possible modifications related to improve completion/inactive rates.

Example Three

Designated Subjects Credential				
Numbers of candidates and completers/graduates for two years reported				
Site (If multiple sites) Delivery Option	**2010-11**		**2011-2012**	
	Number of Candidates*	Number of Completers/ Graduates	Number of Candidates*	Number of Completers/ Graduates
Extension, classroom	99	2	97	7

Includes 68 inactive candidates.

Readers of this Biennial Report noted that the Designated Subjects Credential expires August 2013. The program provided no analysis/discussion regarding the status of the current and inactive candidates with regards to their ability to complete their program. No modifications were offered.

Example Four

Teacher Preparation				
Numbers of candidates and completers/graduates for two years reported				
Site	**2010-11**		**2011-2012**	
Traditional (see previous footnote)	Number of Candidates	Number of Completers/ Graduates	Number of Candidates	Number of Completers/ Graduates
Multiple Subject	16	16	27	25
Multiple Subject with BCLAD	7	7	12	12
Single Subject	61	60	50	48
Education Specialist (M/M and M/S)	7	7	12	12

Completion appears to be a strength for this program, especially as compared with other programs in the unit.

Thorough analysis of completion rates across programs within the unit and addressed in Part B by the unit leader might lead to overall program improvement. Some questions the COA should discuss are:
- Is the current requirement to report program completion data adequate for the purposes of ongoing program improvement?
- How should program completer data be used in the Commission's accreditation system since it is not specified within the adopted standards or preconditions?
- Should the Biennial Report be adjusted to include analysis of completion data?
- Will new 2-year cap create the need for additional years of reporting candidate and completer data?
- Will new 2-year cap create additional issues related to completion?

Next Steps
If the COA determines that the Biennial Report should be revised to include the requirement of an analysis of candidate and completer data and the need for program modifications, Commission staff will develop a revision of the format for the Biennial Report and provide information to program sponsors regarding the change.